

***NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE WESTERN REGION SUPPLEMENT 2-2003
APPLICABLE TO NWSI 10-517
MARCH 15, 2006***

***Operations and Services
Public Weather Service, NWSPD 10-5
WFO Multi-Purpose Weather Products Specification, NWSI 10-517
WESTERN REGION HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOKS***

NOTICE: This publication is available at: <http://www.nws.noaa.gov/directives/>.

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SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This supplement supersedes Western Region Supplement 2-2003 to Instruction 10-517, dated January 31, 2003. Revisions include:

1. Requirement for daily HWO issuance was removed.
2. Much of the Supplement was streamlined, with duplicate information from 10-517 removed.

Signed 02/28/06
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Director, Western Region

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1. Description. The Hazardous Weather Outlook (AWIPS category HWO) provides emergency managers, media, and the general public with a single source of information regarding expected hazardous weather through the seven day forecast period. The HWO addresses valid NWS watches, warnings, and advisories, as well as hazards that may develop beyond the time frame of current warning products through day seven. The HWO is used for both convective and non-convective weather situations.

In the Western Region (WR), the HWO may be issued as either a daily routine product, or on an event-driven basis to convey particular upcoming threats. In coordination with primary customers, each WFO will determine which type of HWO program best meets their local needs. Routine HWOs may be issued seasonally, such as only during the summer for the southwest monsoon.

Operational personnel must exercise initiative and professional judgment to balance the risk to public safety against frequency of warnings and possible constraint of travel and commerce. Protection of life and property will take precedence in these decision-making processes.

2. Definition of a Hazard. A hazard is defined as a hydrometeorological condition or event that poses a threat to life and/or property and typically requires the issuance of at least an advisory. In addition to those hazards mentioned in NWSI 10-517, HWOs may also contain information on Air Stagnation events.

WFOs must maintain an awareness of what is considered a “hazard” to the local customers and partners in order to provide the highest level of customer service. Weather that does not necessarily meet warning or advisory criteria, but represents a significant change from previous weather, may warrant mention in the HWO.

2.1 Marine Hazards. Marine hazards that do not directly affect the coastline, such as Small Craft Advisories and Gale Warnings, may be omitted from the HWO based on local customer needs. These hazards are nearly daily occurrences in some areas, and the HWO is often not disseminated offshore. Marine-based hazards such as high surf and coastal flooding that do affect the coast will be addressed in the HWO.

3. Relationship Between HWO and Other “Outlook” Products.

3.1 Special Weather Statements (SPS) and HWO: The HWO should be used as the tool to issue information about potentially hazardous weather expected within the next seven days. This will give customers “one-stop shopping” when looking for information on potentially hazardous weather. However, where local/state customers have stated a requirement, the Special Weather Statement (SPS) outlook may be issued to provide more detail for major impact events, such as extreme conditions (record breaking snow or cold, extremely damaging winds, etc.), major weather pattern changers, or critical timing (upcoming holidays, hunting seasons, etc.)

4. Format and Content. The HWO is a segmented product. Routine HWOs should be written to cover the entire forecast area, with hazards affecting only a portion of the area included in separate segments. Event-driven HWOs do not need to cover the entire forecast area with each issuance; only the area affected by the forecast hazard is necessary. See NWSI 10-517 for a full description of the format and content of the HWO.

When no hazards are expected in either the short term or long term time section of a routine or event-driven HWO, one of the following statements must be used: “THE PROBABILITY FOR WIDESPREAD HAZARDOUS WEATHER IS LOW”, or “NO HAZARDOUS WEATHER IS EXPECTED AT THIS TIME”.

4.1 Spotter Information Statement: Spotters and emergency managers in WR are trained to report any hazards when they are observed. Whenever any weather hazards are discussed in either the “.DAY ONE” or the “.DAY TWO THROUGH SEVEN” time sections of the HWO, WR WFOs will include a spotter information statement following the “.DAY TWO THROUGH SEVEN” time section. This statement should generally read “WEATHER SPOTTERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO REPORT SIGNIFICANT WEATHER CONDITIONS ACCORDING TO STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES.”

The spotter information statement is not required when both time sections state that no hazards are expected. In this case, WFOs may use the statement above or the phrase “SPOTTER ACTIVATION IS NOT EXPECTED AT THIS TIME.”

5. Updates: HWOs will be updated whenever there is no correlation between the current HWO and actual ongoing or predicted hazardous weather in any portion of the HWO. However, forecasters should place a higher priority on updating relevant watch/warning/advisory products before the HWO.

6. Dissemination: The HWO will be accessible via WFO Internet pages, similarly to other watch/warning/advisory products. Graphically, NWS home page maps will color code a zone within the CWA when hazardous weather is included in the HWO for that area. The color code highlight will remain on the map through the product expiration time.

HWOs will not be highlighted on these maps if either one of the following conditions are met:

- a. A watch or warning is already in effect for any part of the CWA, or issued for any part of CWA prior to the product expiration time.
- b. One of the following phrases is stated first in the “.DAY ONE” *and* the “.DAYS TWO THROUGH SEVEN” time period:

“THE PROBABILITY FOR WIDESPREAD HAZARDOUS WEATHER IS LOW”; or “NO HAZARDOUS WEATHER IS EXPECTED AT THIS TIME.”

APPENDIX A

See also the examples contained in Appendix A of NWSI 10-517.

Example 1:

FLUS46 KEKA 041304
HWOEKA
CAZ001>004-076-051330-

HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE EUREKA CA
500 AM PST WED DEC 4 2002

THIS HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK IS FOR NORTHWEST CALIFORNIA

.DAY ONE...TODAY

NO HAZARDOUS WEATHER IS EXPECTED AT THIS TIME.

.DAYS TWO THROUGH SEVEN...THURSDAY THROUGH TUESDAY

THE PROBABILITY OF WIDESPREAD HAZARDOUS WEATHER IS LOW.

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Example 2:

FLUS45 KTWC 041305
HWOTWC
AZZ019-029>035-051400-

HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE TUCSON AZ
700 AM MST WED DEC 4 2002

THIS HAZARDOUS WEATHER OUTLOOK IS FOR SOUTHEAST ARIZONA

.DAY ONE...TODAY

NO HAZARDOUS WEATHER IS EXPECTED AT THIS TIME.

.DAYS TWO THROUGH SEVEN...THURSDAY THROUGH TUESDAY

A STRONG WINTER STORM SYSTEM WILL REACH SOUTHEAST ARIZONA BY
FRIDAY RESULTING IN THUNDERSTORMS...STRONG WINDS AND MOUNTAIN

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SNOW. BLIZZARD CONDITIONS ARE POSSIBLE BEGINNING FRIDAY THROUGH SATURDAY IN THE WHITE MOUNTAINS IN NORTHERN GRAHAM AND GREENLEE COUNTIES. A BLIZZARD WATCH IS IN EFFECT FOR THIS AREA...PLEASE SEE THE LATEST WINTER WEATHER STATEMENT FROM TUCSON /WWUS45 KTWC/ FOR FURTHER DETAILS.

.SPOTTER INFORMATION STATEMENT...

WEATHER SPOTTERS ARE ENCOURAGED TO REPORT SIGNIFICANT WEATHER CONDITIONS ACCORDING TO STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES.

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